

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY-PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF THE CITY-PARISH OF LAFAYETTE, STATE OF LOUISIANA, TAKEN AT A SPECIAL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 5, 2005.

ATTENDANCE

COUNCIL: Randy Menard – Chair (District 9), Rob Stevenson – Vice Chair (District 8), Bobby Badeaux (District 1), Dale Bourgeois (District 2), Christopher J. Williams, Ph.D. (District 3), Lenwood Broussard (District 5), Bruce Conque (District 6), Marc Mouton (District 7)

ABSENT: Louis C. Benjamin, Jr. (District 4)

COUNCIL STAFF: Norma Dugas (Clerk of the Council)

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: L. J. Durel, Jr. (City-Parish President), Dee Stanley (CAO), Becky Lalumia (Associate CAO/Finance Management), Chief Robert Benoit (Fire Department) Pat Ottinger (Legal Counsel)

COMMENCEMENT

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Call to order.

Councilmember Randy Menard called the Special Council Meeting of February 5, 2005 to order.

INTRODUCTORY ORDINANCE

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: 0-039-2005 An ordinance of the Lafayette City-Parish Council approving a pay plan for the Fire Department, motion to approve for introduction *as amended with amendment to add in the title “Lafayette” before Fire Department* by Broussard , seconded by Badeaux , and the vote was as follows:

YEAS: Badeaux, Bourgeois, Williams, Broussard, Conque, Mouton, Stevenson, Menard

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Benjamin

RECUSED: None

Motion was unanimously approved.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Comments from the public concerning the above Introductory Ordinances.

Speakers were:

Donald Chauvin stated this is a public safety issue with closing of stations and working short-handed. He stressed that it is important to keep the stations open as that is owed to the public. He questioned where the money is that will be realized from the salary cuts and why that could not be used to pay overtime instead of closing stations.

Monique Thibodeaux’s husband has been employed by the Fire Department for 21 years and she emphasized this was the first time she had ever come to a Council meeting. She was appalled that the Council had no respect for the firefighters. She contended that the exchange time did not cost the city financially and any abuse of exchange time was by a small number of individuals. Thibodeaux stated her husband was being punished for something he had nothing to do with. She emphasized it takes dedicated, caring people to risk their lives being a fireman.

Gregory Long stated it also was his first time to attend a Council meeting and that firefighters deserve more money. Ironically, Thursday evening, the home next door to his was on fire and in less than 10 minutes after calling 911 units arrived. Long stated that if the Montrose station had been closed, the units would not have responded as quickly. Although most of the damage to the home was in the kitchen area, the firefighters were able to contain the fire in a short period of time. He noted an off-duty firefighter arrived and immediately began assisting. Long declared that firefighters having to work shorthanded and the closing of stations is not the same type issue as having a recreation center open as this situation is a public safety issue. Citizens save on insurance when the department is fully staffed and Long complimented the firefighters and said they were “heros”.

Patrick Brasseaux thought all departments worked under Lafayette Consolidated Government and was confused about the balance between legislative and administrative branches. He contended that LCG “expropriates” and if the Fire Department is short of funding, then LCG should expropriate from a City project to cover that cost. LCG needs to find a way to pay the firemen as the public approved a pay raise for the firemen.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Council, Chair Menard declared the Special Council Meeting adjourned.

NORMA A. DUGAS, CLERK
LAFAYETTE CITY-PARISH COUNCIL